

The Beauty of Living in Earthen Cities: A 21st - Century Assessment and Prospect with special reference to Ghadames, Libya

BY

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Abstract

Earthen architecture and indigenous resources are facing challenges for their survival. Earthen cities from around the world have been deteriorating gradually for decades because of lack of awareness of their values, negligence, poor maintenance and an emphasis on modernization. Many outstanding examples such as Ghadames, Ghat and Timbuktu in North Africa, are declining and urgently they need the necessary attention of politicians, planners and managers with support, heritage skills and perspectives. The paper discusses the major challenges and examines the related strategies for the 21st century use and living in earthen cities. The goal of this paper is to promote better understanding of the values and benefits of earthen cities. In this context, earthen towns and cities could contribute to ongoing economic and sustainable development programs. The improvement and sustainability of development in North Africa and the Middle East means safeguarding and enhancing both natural and human resources in the region. It is also significantly important to recognize heritage planning, conservation and management ideas for the earthen cities protection, conservation, development and modern use. The paper concludes with some significant recommendations to protect and use more effectively the architectural, historic, educational, economic and socio-cultural values of earthen cities such as Ghadames.

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